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NURSING IN MISSION STATIONS



(This department has a two-fold purpose,—to keep nurses in this country in touch with the work of missionary nurses, and to put missionary nurses in touch with each other, for an interchange of ideas, questions, and suggestions. All nurses engaged in mission work, of every creed and country, are invited to contribute to its columns.)

AN informal letter to the Mission Stations Department by A. Mae Peregrine, who has just returned from China on account of illness, gives glimpses of the work in several places there.

“The accompanying picture shows our hospital at Wuhu, China, situated on the Yangtse, three hundred miles from Shanghai. The houses below are the homes of our doctors and evangelist.

“The wife of Dr. Hart, formerly Miss Maddock of the Illinois Training School, is now president of the China Association of Nurses, organized last summer in the Kuling Mountains.

“Our poor old hospital built over twenty years ago at a cost of about two thousand dollars, is altogether inadequate to the present needs, and is crowded to overflowing.

“Our needs are many and varied, and each seems most imperative; an ulcer ward where we can put the cases which are a menace to others; a woman’s building, where we can not only care for women who need medical and surgical attention, but where young women can be trained as nurses. And very, very much do we need a dispensary building. At present a room in the Gate House is used for the daily morning dispensary; an afternoon dispensary is held in a Chinese building in the city of Wuhu. Our hospital is two miles from the native city.

“I feel that many nurses would enter missionary work if they knew the great satisfaction which such service brings. However, I would not paint too bright a picture of the work and life in a foreign country; for the greatest joy is the result of great sacrifice. Of course that is just as true here in America.

“When I left Wuhu, there was no foreign nurse in the hospital. A letter received a few days ago tells me that Mrs. Wang, a Chinese nurse trained by Dr. Mary Stone at Kiukiang, was helping temporarily.

“I was enabled to see the work of several hospitals in China. During an illness last year I was nursed by Miss Albaugh, a graduate of my own training school, who is in the medical work of the Southern Presbyterian Mission at Kiangyin. I returned with her to her station. We made the trip of two hundred miles down the Yangtse River in a little

houseboat, and enjoyed some unusual experiences on the way. Dr. Worth is the only physician at Kiangyin. He has immense clinics—sometimes over a hundred patients a day—and also carries on the work of a hospital for male patients; by the time Miss Albaugh has learned the language, they expect to have a woman's building.

"In the summer I was a patient in the Kuling Hospital, a hospital for foreigners in the Kuling Mountains. It is in charge of Dr. Barrie, a Canadian physician, who is assisted by Miss Hawley, a graduate of Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland.

"I was there at the time the nurses of China formed an organization, but I was unable to take any part. I'm sure some of the nurses there have given a report of their meetings.

"As I returned home, I was a guest for a day of Dr. Stone, who is noted for her wonderful work as a surgeon. She also conducts an excellent training school for nurses. Her unusual skill, combined with her love for the women of her own country, and her winning personality, make her a favorite everywhere."

DR. ALICE ERNST, writing in *The Missionary Link* of the work at Jhansi, India, says:

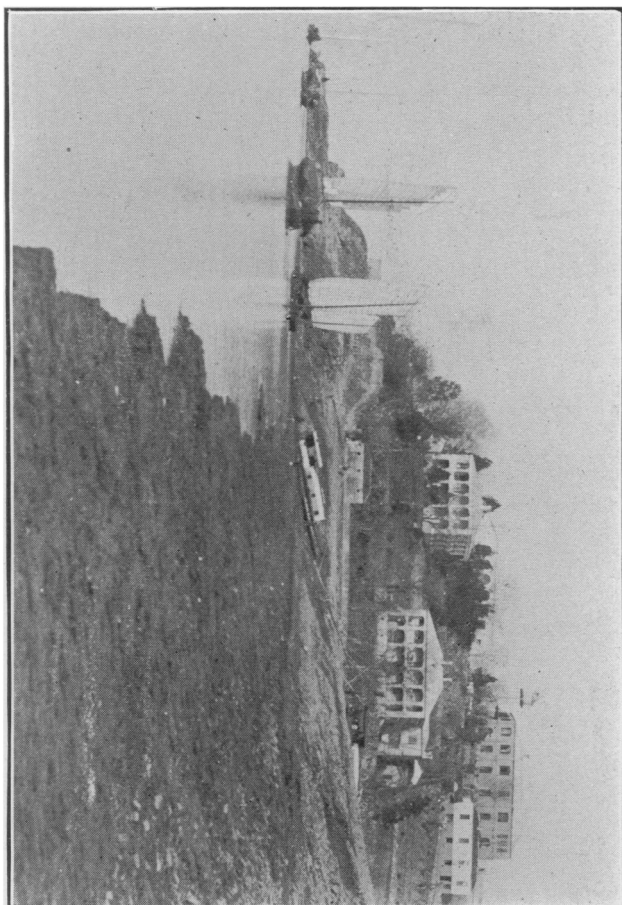
"Of the eleven nurses in the training school at present, four are in the graduating class, four in the junior class, and three are probationers. During the past year we have been able to weed out those who showed unfitness for the work, and we feel that the girls we now have are the most promising we ever had. They show increasing interest in their work and studies, and altogether we are much encouraged.

"By means of the money obtained by our sale of fancy work, largely made by the girls themselves, we have been able to get some necessary furniture for the nurses' home, and they now have a bright, comfortable room for their classes and meetings.

"A new wing to accommodate eight nurses was added to our nurses' home during the year, the expense of which was entirely covered by a special gift from Government."

The Alaskan Churchman contains an article by Miss Emberley about the growth of the work at St. Matthew's Hospital, from which we quote at length:

"Even in the spring of 1905, when my service at St. Matthew's began, the hospital was very rude and incomplete. Wooden partitions afforded knot holes of observation for the curious from one room to another; rough floors defied our efforts at neatness, most of the beds, built of native lumber on the spot, were springless and provided only



HOSPITAL AT WUHU, CHINA.

with sacks of hay as mattresses and pillows; all the water we used was brought from the river in buckets, and all waste was carried away in like manner; our appliances were of the crudest, and we were in debt. The press of work was too urgent for much planning of improvements; the care of the sick and the injured who came daily to our doors occupied us to the exclusion of all other interests; and for months it was patient plodding, doing the best we could with what we had, thanking God for the daily strength that carried us through those strenuous times.

"In July of that year came the flood. The swollen and turbulent Tanana threatened for days the destruction of the town, and submerged a large part of it in several feet of water. Our hopes for help from the town in finishing the hospital building were dashed for that year.

"We had several gifts from 'outside' that summer, and so after all we were able to put up proper partitions and to lay a good floor in the hospital. When there arrived six good hospital beds from the disused Bishop Rowe Hospital in Skaguay, and four more, fully equipped from the Woman's Auxiliary of the home church, we felt well equipped, indeed. In November of that year the last dollar of debt was paid, and then we turned ourselves with thankful courage to the thought of finishing the building and adding to our equipment. Since then, we are grateful to say, we have not had to ask help from the Board, and, save for the salaries of the workers, have managed to meet our running expenses and from time to time to make improvements. The next autumn the first St. Matthew's fair was held, and the articles for this bazaar and the hospital linens, etc., which come from the Woman's Auxiliary, are practically the only gratuities which we regularly receive from the home church. Twenty per cent. of the work done at St. Matthew's Hospital is charity.

"In 1906 we had large plans for St. Matthew's. The camp had practically recovered from the set back of the flood, the mines were producing well, business was flourishing, and we began to hope that not only could the hospital be supported in the town, but even that a parish organization might be effected and the Bishop relieved of the expenses of the church.

"That year the ice went out on the 30th of April—an early summer—and we were full of joyful eagerness for all the activities of the open season when one afternoon in May we heard the shriek of the siren whistle and looked on while the whole of the business portion of our town burned in a few hours. Next day when the long-anticipated 'first boat' from Dawson arrived it was to find only blackened embers and smoking heaps of débris where Fairbanks had been. I said only blackened embers, but I was wrong; for already the unquenchable

spirit of the pioneers had re-asserted itself, and here and there a tent was open for business. . . . By a special providence it would almost seem, the mission escaped both flood and fire, suffering only indirectly from the effects of each. It was out of the question to expect help from the town that year, so we put aside our plans and turned ourselves to help where we could those who were worse off than we.

"Next year came the labor troubles and the money panic, and Fairbanks, struggling to recover from the disaster of the fire, seems never to have quite regained the prosperity of the old days.

"Through all these vicissitudes the work of the church and the hospital has gone on uninterruptedly, and St. Matthew's reading room has scattered good literature over the entire district. The three branches of our work have been so interwoven and become so interdependent that it is hard to consider them apart from each other. And gradually the work of St. Matthew's widened. Always the Indians had come with their babies for baptism, their young people to be married, or seeking help in sickness. But as time went on they came from farther and farther away, and they begged for a mission and for schools. And as we could we went about among them—the clergy, of course, most of all, but often one of the nurses would visit a village where there was illness and sometimes the sick were brought to the hospital for care. I shall never forget some of the Indian services held on the banks of the Tanana, the natives, eager and reverent, joining in the service in their own language and singing in their plaintive voices the hymns which had been translated into their own tongue. How eager they were for instruction, how simple and child-like their faith! The fruits of those early labors are seen in the now well-established Tanana Valley Mission with its chain of stations along the river. The more orderly villages, the clean and happy children, the English speech, and the improvement in morals bear testimony to the faithful work of the little group of missionaries along the Tanana.

"And what is in the future? The procession of gold seekers advances, halts, and passes on, but the church stands ever with welcoming doors open to all who seek her comfort. Year by year the bitter trail claims its toll of life and limb; day by day the danger lurks in the deep-driven tunnels of the mines; hardships and exposure constantly breed disease, and sin and wrong bring their relentless reward. Surely so long as these go on our hospital doors must stand wide. And the Indian? Year by year as the game retreats he wins a scantier livelihood from his hunting and fishing; year by year since the white man came has he sunk to lower depths of uncleanness and vice. The redemption of his race lies largely in the gift of the church, whose guidance and protection must save him from degradation and annihilation."